

**ATLANTIC GEOSCIENCE SOCIETY  
EDUCATION COMMITTEE  
2009 ANNUAL REPORT**

Summary statement

Lots of great ideas, too many projects in progress and not enough people to bring them to fruition. That pretty well sums up the last year. You are reading this report likely because you are interested in education. If you are not a member of the Education Committee, you may wish to consider participating in one of the projects mentioned in this report. Please don't hesitate to contact any committee member to discuss your interest.

*Nova Scotia Branch*

In our Atlantic community, several continue to contribute to the "Four Billion Years and Counting: Canada's Geological Heritage" (FBY) book project. This project is a tremendous effort and will deliver a landmark publication on the geology of Canada. AGS members are providing content (text, graphic images, photographs), co-ordinating various aspects of development and production, participating in committee activity, and reviewing draft manuscripts. A flyer on the project is available at the AGS Publications table. The book project website is <http://www.earthsciencescanada.com/4by/>.

The FBY book is a key product of Canada's efforts to celebrate the International Year of Planet Earth (IYPE). Publication of the English volume should be late 2010 by Nimbus and the Canadian Federation of Earth Sciences. There are three major sections: Foundations; Evolution of Canada; and Wealth and Health. There are more than 100 contributors, whose efforts are co-ordinated by seven editors. The book will be attractively illustrated, with photographs, paintings, and schematics. The French volume will be published not long after the English version.

Other IYPE projects are the WHERE challenge (deadline 1 March 2010 - <http://www.earthsciencescanada.com/where/>) for high school students and the Careers website (<http://www.earthsciencescanada.com/careers/>). Please visit the IYPE website (<http://www.earthsciencescanada.com/iype/>) for information on the projects in Canada.

Committee member Andy Henry arranged meetings with key partners in the offshore initiative that is poised to offer grants to successful applications in education. Presentations of AGS education programs, products and plans were made by Jennifer Bates, Rob Fensome, Andy Henry and Graham Williams to ExxonMobil, EnCana and the Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board. The presentation to EnCana led to a request to submit a proposal on development of the EarthNet website. The request was successful and we have made slow progress on development of content centred on the formation of oil and natural gas. The desperate need to find an appropriate web developer has prevented posting of completed materials. This stumbling block must be removed in the upcoming year.

As part of the Encana-funded EarthNet development, a few members met with staff of the NSCC Animation Studio in Truro last spring through introductions by member Paul Batson. Two students expressed interest in creating short animated segments as part of the larger story on how oil and gas forms. This story will take some time to tell. A detailed storyboard is the first step and Hans Wielens has produced a first draft. Merging animation, video clips (captured by Dave Frobel and Patrick Potter), stills and voice-over to produce short (3-5 minute) segments for various education purposes is envisioned.

AGS was asked to consider supporting the travel costs of a Maritime region teacher to GeoCanada 2010 being held in Calgary in May 2010. Council did approve the concept and now a request for funding must be submitted to the AGS Products Committee. How a teacher will be selected has not been defined but perhaps EdGEO workshop 'alumnae' in NS and NB could be invited to submit a proposal.

A workshop on evolution will take place February 5, at Acadia University, as part of the AGS 2010 Colloquium program. The first part of the workshop will be an interactive presentation. The presenters will show how geological and biological evidence can be brought together in a compelling way that enhances the teaching of evolution, especially at junior and senior high school levels. Also, they will show how elements of the evolutionary story can be demonstrated by exploring the geology and paleobiology of Nova Scotia. Interactive session presenters include

Sonya Dehler, Rob Fensome and Graham Williams, all of the Geological Survey of Canada (Atlantic). A forum entitled on the teaching of evolution, facilitated by Melissa Grey (Joggins Fossil Centre), will follow. Forum members include: Simon Haslett (Director of the Centre of Excellence in Learning and Teaching, University of Wales), Heather Johnson (Halifax Independent School), Anne Marie Ryan (Department of Earth Sciences, Dalhousie University), Don Stewart (Department of Biology, Acadia University), Tracy Webb (Horton High School). We expect the audience will include education students from Acadia, geology students from Maritime universities, school teachers and AGS members.

The following projects and activities made some progress over the last year. Those taking the lead on these initiatives are noted in brackets. *Volunteers to help move along these activities are most welcome.*

- . Re-printing of the 2004 publication *Nova Scotia Rocks*: This brochure continues to be very popular with the public and visitors to the province. A sponsor letter is poised for delivery. A digital download version is under consideration. (Andy Henry)
- . Beyond The Last Billion Years (BLBY) Public Talk Series: After running for eight years, the series could not run in 2009 due to the temporary closure of the NS Museum of Natural History. Now, a speaker line-up for the 2010 season is under construction. (Dustin Whalen)
- . A first draft of the text for a booklet to accompany the Fundy Basin paintings is at the review stage. (Graham Williams)
- . Collaboration between AGS and the Photographic Guild of Nova Scotia (PGNS): There is annual awarding of the *Atlantic Geoscience Society Award* (best geological photograph) and the "*The Last Billion Years*" Award (best Atlantic Canada geological photograph). AGS may use the entered photographs for education purposes. (Rob Fensome)
- . Development of postcards based on the Fundy Basin paintings on display at the Fundy Geological Museum: Print quotes have been obtained. Final artwork yet to be completed (Carol Corbett and Pat Welton).
- . Committee members give presentations in schools, science centres, museums (eg. FGM Elderhostel program renamed as Exploritas) and/or as members of ASLA/SITS or by individual request.

#### *New Brunswick Branch*

Below is a report from Randy Miller on the development of a Geopark in the Saint John area. The website is yet to be finished.

"The Stonehammer Geological Project (led by the Stonehammer Geopark Working Group) has submitted a proposal to UNESCO and the Global Geoparks Network hoping to create the first North American member of the Global Geoparks Network. The proposed geopark is located in southern New Brunswick, encompassing about 2800 sq km with 58 geosites identified to date. Geosites all have some identifiable geological feature or story and may include for example existing parks, roadside outcrops, or remote fossil sites. The geosites have all been categorized as suitable for geotourism, geoeducation, or research based on various factors including access, ownership, sensitivity, safety and more.

The proposed geopark is centred on Saint John and extends from Lepreau Falls Provincial Park in the west, to the Fundy Trail Parkway in the east, north to Norton and up the Saint John River to Hampstead. We describe the geopark as having 'A billion years of stories' and the area of the park was designed to include as much of the geological time scale as reasonable, and a variety of geological features. The region also has a long history of geological exploration and discovery. The name Stonehammer is meant, in part, to recognize the work of the 'Steinhammer Club' (1857-1862) whose early geological work included much of the proposed geopark. The geopark includes as many existing parks as possible to allow geotourism to take place within current infrastructure.

The Stonehammer Geological Project has agreements with multiple partners to manage and operate the 'park'. Our application is currently with UNESCO and the Global Geoparks Network. They examine 2009 applications during the winter. Some of our working group is going to the Geoparks2010 conference in Malaysia in April. If they like our document they will arrange a site visit in the Spring/Summer and the earliest we might possibly hear about our acceptance into the GGN would be in the Fall of this year. The application consists of a printed 70 page description along with electronic appendices."

## *Finances*

A financial report for 2009 was prepared by Committee Treasurer Graham Williams and submitted to the AGS Treasurer for review. Much of the funds is committed to programs such as EarthNet. At the December 2009 meeting, there was a suggestion to invest some of the funds in Guaranteed Investment Certificates. The Committee's decision was to invest \$20,000 of the funds in two GIC investments, one cashable and the other non-redeemable for one year. The Treasurer and Chair of the Committee have made these arrangements. Sales at the 2009 Gem and Mineral Show in Parrsboro were brisk. Nelly Koziel has agreed to co-ordinate this activity in 2010 as long as member Bob Grantham is willing to repeat his 2009 "knowledge donation".

## *Promotion, External Collaboration and Internal Communication*

Promotion is the responsibility of each sub-committee for its event or product. However, we are very fortunate that Nelly Koziel is willing to assist with much of these individual efforts (eg. EdGEO workshops, public talks, AST conference, Parrsboro Rock and Gem Show, AGS booth at annual Colloquium). The success of the Parrsboro Rock and Gem Show, the evening public lectures and the EdGEO workshops are a testament to Nelly's hard work. On behalf of the AGS Education Committee, I thank Nelly for her assistance and dedication.

To assist with good internal communications, the Chair of the Education Committee (or designate) is now an ex officio member of AGS Council and reports to Council. Also, the AGS President is an ex officio observer of the Committee, and receives copies of meeting minutes and invitations to meetings. At present, six members of the Education Committee are members of Council.

AGS members are involved in or leading the development of education resources under the auspices of other like-minded groups and committees. These members continue to report at meetings: Garth Demont on community interactions; Rob Fensome on the Geology of Canada book; Nancy Muzzatti on Video Committee activities; and Jennifer on NS EdGEO Committee workshops. Members also provide updates on activities at their respective workplaces particularly museums and centres that offer public education programs such as the Fundy Geological Museum and the Eastern Shore Education Resource Centre. Education activities in Newfoundland and Labrador are organized under the Newfoundland and Labrador section of the Geological Association of Canada. Michelle Miskell is the current chair and has agreed to provide periodic updates on activities on The Rock.

The AGS Education Committee is very active and we try to keep AGS members informed of our activities in ways other than the annual report. Convening an education session at the annual AGS Colloquium is one way. We do attempt to regularly submit articles for the AGS Newsletter but this year we were delinquent. Contributions to GEOLOG, What on Earth, National EdGEO, and science education newsletters are other excellent communication tools. The Education Committee page on the AGS website desperately needs an update. Meanwhile, please read the AGS newsletter and website for updates and announcements. Alternatively, you may contact any member.

Members of the New Brunswick branch of the AGS Education Committee are:

Toon Pronk (chair), Dave Lentz, Gwen Martin, Malcolm McLeod, Randy Miller, Adrian Park, Mike Parkhill, Jim Walker and Reg Wilson.

The Nova Scotia branch include: Ken Adams, Dottie Alt, Sandra Barr, Jennifer Bates (chair), Paul Batson, Sally Camus, Carol Corbett, Garth Demont, Howard Donohoe, Warren Ervine, Gordon Fader, Rob Fensome, David Frobel, Martha Grantham, Bob Grantham, Richard Haworth, Andrew Henry, Fenton Isenor, Chris Jauer, Heather Johnson, George Jordan, Elisabeth Kusters, Andrew MacRae, Henrietta Mann, Chris Mansky, Brian Matthews, Ann Miller, Murray Metherall, Brendan Murphy, Roger Outhouse, Patrick Potter, Pat Ryall, Anne Marie Ryan, John Shimeld, Deborah Skilliter, Pat Welton, Dustin Whalen, Hans Wielens, Sonya Woods, Graham Williams and Marcos Zentilli. We welcome Melissa Grey (JFC) as the newest member of the NS branch.

Submitted by  
Jennifer Bates  
Chair, AGS Education Committee  
jbates@nrca.gc.ca